

### 3.1 CONFIRMATION IN THE DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE : A GUIDE TO CLERGY FROM THE BISHOP

1. This guide has been authorized by the Bishop and details the practice of the Bishop and the Assistant Bishop.
2. Arrangements for Confirmation should be directed to the Bishop’s Executive Assistant who will liaise with the Bishop to determine who will be the confirming Bishop. The Executive Assistant will advise the Parish Priest or Chaplain.
3. In the remainder of these guidelines, the term Bishop refers to the confirming Bishop except where the phrase “Diocesan Bishop” is used.
4. Confirmation is normally administered within the Eucharist but this can be varied according to the pastoral circumstances of the occasion.

If there are no baptisms the Order begins on page 84 of A Prayer Book for Australia.

If there are baptisms the Order begins on page 51 of A Prayer Book for Australia.

The Bishop is open to conducting a baptism and confirmation in accordance with

- The Book of Common Prayer,
- An Australian Prayer Book, or
- The Book of Common Worship of the Church of England.
- In specific circumstances consideration may be given to use of an alternate rite. This needs to in consultation with the Bishop, and requires the Diocesan Bishop’s consent.

The use of an alternate liturgy must be discussed with the Bishop at least two weeks prior to the service.

The introduction explaining baptism and confirmation is not usually used.

5. If a candidate needs to be baptized before receiving Confirmation careful consideration should be given to finding ways that this might take place immediately prior to the Confirmation and not in any earlier service. The Bishop will administer the sacrament of Baptism.
6. The Bishop will meet the candidates in church prior to the service. Please arrange for this.
7. The Bishop will stand to administer Confirmation laying one hand on the candidate’s head, one candidate at a time. As a general rule, the candidates should stand rather than kneel before the Bishop.
8. Depending on the custom of the parish, the Bishop will also anoint the candidate’s forehead with the Oil of Chrism. Please have plenty of the Oil of Chrism.
9. Please have a purificator available to clean the Bishop’s hand after the anointings.

10. There is no need for a Bishop’s Chair to be placed in front of the Altar. The Bishop will not require it nor use it. It will be a visual distraction.
11. The Bishop will vest according to the custom of the parish and in accordance with the directions of the Diocesan Bishop. This means that the Bishop will normally be robed and wear a mitre. The Bishop holds his Pastoral staff in his/her left hand, places her/his right hand on the candidate’s head, prays the Confirmation prayer, then anoints the candidate’s forehead. The Bishop needs to be able to see or clearly hear the candidate’s name before laying his/her hand.
12. After all the candidates have been confirmed the Bishop invites the congregation to join in praying the post-confirmation prayer *Defend, O Lord,...* The Bishop will also pray the prayer at section 23.
13. Only Bishops can receive persons from another church into the Anglican Church of Australia. The form of reception is on page 95 of A Prayer Book for Australia.
14. The colour for Confirmation or Baptism and Confirmation is the colour of the day if celebrated as the usual parish service for the Sunday and the readings are the readings for the Sunday. If the service is an additional ‘stand-alone’ celebration of Confirmation then the colour is white and the readings need to be negotiated with the Bishop at least two weeks before the service.
15. Normally candidates should be at least twelve years of age for Confirmation. If you are thinking of accepting a candidate younger than twelve for preparation please discuss this with the Bishop prior to beginning preparation classes.
16. You must supply and have ready for signing the Confirmation and Reception certificates. The Diocesan Confirmation form with the details of the candidates should be sent to the Bishop’s Executive Assistant two weeks before the Confirmation date.
17. The Bishop is very happy for photos to be taken with the candidates after the service either as a group or individually. Please advise the Bishop of the arrangements before the service.
18. The Bishop will seek to write a letter to each candidate the week after the service encouraging them to be faithful to their Confirmation vows and suggesting regular reading of the Scriptures.
19. Please arrange for your candidates to begin a course of Bible Reading Notes that offer simple daily readings with explanations. It is vital that candidates be grounded in the Faith and given the resource of the Scriptures to sustain their discipleship.
20. As is usual during an episcopal visit you should ensure that the Bishop knows which parts of the service are usually sung, and if there are options, you should advise the Bishop about the normal practice around those options. If a booklet is to be printed or a Powerpoint display is used, a copy should be forwarded to the Bishop two weeks in advance.

21. Confirmation provides the opportunity for profound commitment to Christ and the strengthening by the Holy Spirit for faithful discipleship. The experience of seeing both young persons and adults commit their lives to Christ can strike a chord of renewal to discipleship in the hearts of members of the congregation. Therefore it is very appropriate that the Order of Service includes the Commissioning of all God’s People (attached) or the section before the Blessing that is addressed to the congregation by the Bishop and begins: *“All who have been baptized and confirmed are called...”*.
22. Your preparation of the candidates is deeply appreciated. The Bishop wants to affirm your teaching and evangelism ministries by celebrating as meaningfully as he can the Confirmation and Baptism so that all are edified.

**March, 2018**

**Commission**

*The bishop use this Commission*

The call to the disciple of Christ is to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourselves.

**We hear this call.**

The call is to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being.

**We hear this call.**

The call is to strive to safeguard the integrity of God’s creation and to respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth.

**We hear this call.**

The call is to persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, to repent and return to the Lord.

**We hear this call.**

The call is to proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ.

**We hear this call.**

The call is to continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

**We hear this call.**

*Followed by the blessing*